

ACM TODS EIC Selection

As you should have heard by now (there was a DBWORLD announcement), there is a new Editor-in-Chief (EIC) of *ACM Transactions on Database Systems* (TODS). Meral Ozsoyoglu of Case Western Reserve University has replaced Rick Snodgrass as TODS EIC as of September 17, 2007. In this short note, I want to give the SIGMOD community information about the process that was followed.

First let me provide some background. ACM headquarters is organized along a number of directorates; the ones relevant for SIGMOD and TODS are those of SIGs, and publications. For each of these, there are policy boards that establish the policies that headquarters staff follow. SIGMOD organization is on the SIG side and SIGMOD Chair is a member of SIG Governing Board, ACM TODS is on the publications side, as are all ACM publications. Therefore, although SIGMOD is an important stakeholder and for the purposes of distributing ACM Digital Library income is considered the “owner” of TODS, the appointment of TODS EIC is the responsibility of the ACM Publications Board.

The EIC selection process starts by the Publications Board selecting one of its members to oversee the process. The Publications Board member then forms a EIC Nominating Committee and obtains Publications Board approval for the committee. The Nominating Committee then gathers a list of possible candidates for the position, produces a short list, asks for vision statements and other supporting material from the short-listed candidates and makes a recommendation to the Publications Board. The appointment is finalized when the Publications Board approves the recommendation.

In this year’s process, I was the Publications Board member charged with setting up the Nominating Committee and coordinating its work. I also chaired the Nominating Committee that additionally included Phil Bernstein (Microsoft Research), Mary Fernandez (AT&T Labs – Research), Phokion Kolaitis (IBM Almaden Research Center), Krithi Ramamritham (IIT Bombay), and Gerhard Weikum (Max-Planck Institute for Informatics). We issued a public call for nominations through DBWORLD, and consulted a phone interview with Rick Snodgrass as out-going EIC, and an in-person interview during SIGMOD/PODS 2007 with Raghu Ramakrishnan as SIGMOD Chair. Thus, the relevant stakeholders were consulted.

As a result of these, the Nominating Committee gathered an initial list of ten nominees. After discussions, the Nominating Committee reduced this list to a short list of four. These colleagues were contacted to check their availability and all but one let their names stand. These three nominees were asked to supply statements responding to a set of questions that the Nominating Committee posed as well as their vision for TODS. We were very pleased with the depth and thoughtfulness of these statements; it was clear that all of the nominees had spent considerable time thinking about where TODS is and where they would like it to go. Interestingly, there were overlaps between the statements.

Making the final choice from among three very able colleagues was naturally difficult, but the Nominating Committee decided to recommend Meral Ozsoyoglu as the next EIC of TODS. The Publications Board approved this recommendation with enthusiasm and appointed Meral to a four year (renewable) term.

The Nominating Committee feels that the entire process worked very well. We appreciated the engagement of the community in supplying us with a number of possible candidates, and the willingness of both Rick and Raghu to provide us with suggestions and more candidates.

The Nominating Committee is excited by the leadership that Meral will bring to ACM TODS and we are certain that TODS will maintain its position as a preeminent publication venue under her leadership. We would also like to thank Rick Snodgrass for his remarkable 15 years of exemplary service to ACM TODS (the last eight years as EIC). Under his leadership, the journal has been a dynamic publication venue and the source of a number of experiments and initiatives.

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